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REVIEWED BY

DATE 4/6/88

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

BUREAU OF INTELLIGENCE AND RESEARCH

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Research Memorandum

250-170, October 25, 1962

() SECRETARY'S

() DOWNGRADE IS TO THE SECRETARY

THROUGH: S/S

FROM : INR - Roger Hillsman

OCT 20 1962
DEPUTY UNDER
SECRETARY OF STATESUBJECT: Statements on the Cuban Crisis by Lower-Ranking Bloc Officials

We are maintaining a close watch on all remarks relating to the current crisis by Soviet bloc nationals around the world. The reports that we have received through October 25 of such remarks indicate that:

(1) Soviet bloc diplomats (at least through October 24) were uninstructed and were expressing their own opinions (with the possible exception of those at the UN);

(2) Soviet statements that the blockade would be resisted with force seemed to stem largely from flag-waving responses in public defense of Soviet prestige, while in at least three instances of private conversations, Soviet officials foresaw a Soviet retaliation in some unspecified form, especially in the event of attacks on Soviet ships;

(3) East European officials were notably calm and foresaw no war resulting from the crisis.

Only four reports of remarks by Soviet officials indicate that these remarks may well have been made under specific instructions.

One told on October 25 that if the US sinks Soviet ships, the Soviets will sink US ships, but that the Soviets would not resort first to nuclear weapons. He said further that the Soviets are willing to negotiate and would "hold off their ships" during negotiations. Most significantly, the question of the removal of the rocket bases could be negotiated. The other three reports of remarks which were quite possibly made under instructions came from UN circles in New York where the Soviets were making relatively bellicose statements or circulating rumors with the evident aim of deterring the US from action against Cuba and from interception of Soviet ships.

Seven instances of strong Soviet statements made on October 23 and 24 occurred in either social or public situations in which the speaker was undoubtedly concerned with Soviet prestige and/or was responding from his own patriotic convictions. In isolated contrast, [redacted] stated at a social function that he did not know how the USSR would respond to the blockade.

All the reports of statements by Soviet lower-rank officials through October 24 are so miscellaneous and unpatterned in content that general lack of instruction seems apparent.

The reported reactions of East European officials indicate unconcern over the possibility of serious resort to force. However, with the exception of one statement to a Western correspondent, none of the statements made by East European officials were for public consumption.

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EXCISE

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MANDATORY REVIEW

CASE # NLK- 88-68 DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MB

DOCUMENT # 90 RECEIVED BY 1P SECRETARY... : DATES-170, October 26, 1962

() RELEASE () DECLASSIFY
 () EXCISE () DECLASSIFY in PART
 () DENY () Non-responsive info.

TO : The Secretary
 THROUGH: S/S
 FROM : INR - Roger Hillman
 () CLASSIFY as
 TS authority to: OADR

() DOWNGRADE TO () S or () C OADR
 SUBJECT: Statements on the Cuban Crisis by Lower-Ranking Bloc Officials

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Seven instances of strong Soviet statements made on October 23 and 24 occurred in either social or public situations in which the speaker was undoubtedly concerned with Soviet prestige and/or was responding from his own patriotic convictions. In isolated contrast, the Soviet Ambassador to Mexico stated at a social function that he did not know how the USSR would respond to the blockade.

All the reports of statements by Soviet lower-rank officials through October 24 are so miscellaneous and unpatterned in content that general lack of instruction seems apparent.

The reported reactions of East European officials indicate unconcern over the possibility of serious resort to force. However, with the exception of one statement to a Western correspondent, none of the statements made by East European officials were for public consumption.